

WISCONSIN WORKS (W-2) CONTRACT AND IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

201 E. Washington Avenue, GEF 1, Room D203
Madison, WI

Friday, November 16, 2001

10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

MINUTES

The W-2 Contract and Implementation Committee is the single point of contact for feedback to the Department of Workforce Development on policy implementation related to W-2 agencies, and includes representation from the Wisconsin County Human Service Association (WCHSA), Urban Caucus counties, W-2 private agencies in Milwaukee County and the balance of state, and Tribal W-2 agencies.

COMMITTEE: Members (Present = X)

Eric Baker..... DWS/AO
William B. Adams Racine County
Jon Angeli..... Southwest Consortium
X Phyllis A. Bermingham... Marathon County
X Mona Garland..... OIC
Tina Koehn UMOS
X Teresa Pierce Workforce Connections
Laverne Plucinski Bad River Chippewa
Jewel Reichert..... Fond du Lac County
Adelene Robinson Kenosha County
X Shirley Ross La Crosse County
X Liz Green..... Dane County
X Jerry Stepaniak..... MAXIMUS
Julia Taylor YW Works
Glynis Underwood ESI
X Michael Van Dyke..... Door County

Alternates (Present = X)

Jan Alft Marathon County
Linda Brandenburg..... ESI
Marcia Christiansen.... Forward Services Corp.
X Cheryl Cobb UMOS
Doris Green..... OIC
X Deb Hughes Southwest Consortium
Edward Kamin III Kenosha County
Richard L. Kammerud Polk County
X James Krivsky Racine County
X Barbara Metoxen..... Oneida Nation
Tom Miller La Crosse County
X Rita Renner YW Works
Chris Schmitz Fond du Lac County

State Staff

Attendees:

Gary Denis, DWS/BWP
Roger Kautz, DWS/BPS
Ginevra Ewers, DWS/BDS
Kelly Bablitch, Legislative Aid
Paul Saeman, DWD/BWI
Rose Lynch, ASD
Gerry Mayhew DWS/BWP
Pat McDonnell, DWD/AO

Victoria Carreon, LFB
Nancy Buckwalter, DWS/BPS
Jude Morse, DWS/BPS
Mary Rowin, DWS/AO
Tim Hineline, DWS
Dianne Reynolds, DWS/BWP
Joann Schmitt, DWS/BPS
Erin Fath, DOA

Guests:

Lavada Williams, OIC
Jane Batha, Curtis & Asso.
John Wilberding, MAXIMUS
Char Manowski, OIC
Jim Nitz, Kaiser

Shirley Kitchen, Dodge Co. DHS
Carol Medaris, WCCF
Marilyn Putz, Walworth Co.
Dick Buschmann, MCDHS

Recorder: Jayne Wanless, DWS/BWP

Welcome

Mary Rowin welcomed the group members, staff and guests and explained that Eric Baker is at a conference in Wisconsin Dells. Ms. Rowin informed the group that she attended her first meeting of the Department of Health and Family Services Faith Based Advisory Council and plans to become a regular member. Ms. Rowin

surveyed the group to see if members were interested in receiving a copy of the final DWD and DWS strategic plans. The committee members voiced an interest in receiving the printed information.

The group reviewed a draft Administrator's Memo on Employee Bonuses. A subcommittee from the C&I committee and DWD staff generated suggestions to address instances of employee bonuses indicated in the Legislative Audit Bureau report. Ideas from the C&I subcommittee on this topic are included in the memo. Members reviewed the conditions that must be met and submitted to the Department for approval before a bonus can be issued.

Minutes Approval

Jim Krivsky made a motion to approve the October's meeting minutes and was seconded by Liz Green; by unanimous vote the motion carried.

Issue/Discussion: Contract Update, Jude Morse, DWS/BPS

Ms. Morse joined the group in person to report on the 2002-2003 contracts. All appeals have been resolved and the original decisions remain unchanged. The Department issued a document recently to the Area Administrators outlining changes in the contract due to action taken during the biennial budget process and other miscellaneous changes. The responses to the October 3rd, 2001 conference call will be issued in an Operations Memo. DWS is updating the old DES and DWE websites; the update includes a 2002-2003 Contract page with all the finalized documents.

Mr. Van Dyke asked if the contract would have additional changes due to a letter from Senator Moore's office. Senator Moore's letter addresses carrying money over from one contract to another and Milwaukee Regional Boundaries. Ms. Rowin explained that the letter has to do with start-up costs with a few agencies; the 2002-2003 contracts do not include an allocation for start up. The Department is reviewing start-up plans to see if expenditures are necessary. The Legislature hopes to use remaining monies in the current contracts for a contingency fund for the 2002-2003 contract period.

Ms. Bermingham pointed out in a recent article the Legislative Audit Bureau does not recognize any underfunding in the current contract. Ms. Rowin says the Department is waiting for final numbers because tracking method vary among agencies. Some agencies know they will have funds left over in their current contracts and have volunteered to de-obligate funds to cover underfunding in the UMOS contract.

Issue/Discussion: Feedback on the Performance Standards Symposium, Mary Rowin, DWS/AO

Mary Rowin said the evaluations from the symposium were not good. She added the facilities were not set up for that many people, the sound system did not work, and the panel was not able to answer questions that required research and time to develop answers. In the future, DWD needs to look at the difference between managers' and line staff's needs.

Ms. Rowin requested input on how members and guests would like information shared in the future. The responses included:

- Key people need to be present and be able to follow up on questions the same day
- Split the day between CARES technical information and management information
- Smaller groups
- More time needed for each issue
- The symposium was not bad; some members voiced they have been to worse
- Have questions submitted ahead of time
- Pick speakers carefully and make sure they know the audience
- Need to include specifics
- Send out the Information Map ahead of time, make sure the contract matches the Information Map
- Use regional meetings
- Start technical discussion sooner (1-2 months)
- Use DXBMs to communicate
- Use ETNs to save travel time and expense and follow-up at regional meetings

Gerry Mayhew informed the committee that the new worker stream will include a new course on how to report performance standards. It will start in March. Tony Gejits will provide a 6-hour training for supervisors on performance standards. This will be available in every region in March and April. A member requested that experts on the performance standards travel to each region. Another member requested that the training include a walk through of the Information Map for line staff along with the CARES technical information.

Issue/Discussion: CARES Strategic Plan, Pat McDonnell, DWS/AO

Pat McDonnell asked for feedback on the CARES Strategic Plan presented at the October meeting. The feedback included:

- Concerns with the separation of the work program system and the income maintenance; a person would need two workers.
- Suggestion to broaden access but limit links
- Separate office number for WAA
- A worker-friendly system that can be used by non-profits and private agencies
- For some programs people may be able to sign-up on the internet; make sure these interconnect
- Make sure tribes continue to have access to the IRS data exchange
- Start with a whole new up-to-date system that a new worker could learn in a short period of time (references to painting horse black and white does not make it a Zebra or dressing up a pig does not make it anything more than a pig)
- Take out the redundancy

The next step in the Strategic Planning Process is for a collaborative group of technical people to look at CARES. In the spring they will start looking at:

- Program Autonomy
- Registration
- Clearance
- Data Collection in the driver flow
- Conceptual model for work program functions

The old program will not be taken down to put in a new system. DWD is preparing to update the system by moving to a relationship mainframe, to an Internet main frame, consistent with the business structure of the contract agencies.

Issue/Discussion: W-2 Milwaukee Advisory Panel, Mary Rowin, DWS/AO

Prior to the meeting, the committee received a copy of the Department's Response to the Milwaukee Advisory Panel for review. The committee questioned the amount of involvement they will have in the statewide suggestions. Ms. Rowin commented that C&I would be involved in the recommendations that affect the entire state. DWD will put together a summary chart indicating which recommendations are Milwaukee only and which are statewide. A member voiced concern over the advisory panel's recommendation to change from 30 to 60 days for re-evaluation of a CMS placement as it would increase workload. The member said this could be a big change depending on the language used in the policy. Members questioned whether a change would only be issued in a new manual release or if agencies would get a heads-up memo. The committee requested information on how the policy change would be issued, when the policy change would be implemented, if a change is up for discussion and whether a change needs legislative approval before recommendations can be acted on added to the summary chart.

Ms. Bablitch commented that the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) sent a letter to DWD requesting any plan for an open district come before JFC for approval. DWD agreed to implement the recommendations but the logistics have not been worked out, including the funding. A committee member questioned whether the Advisory Panel supports an open district.

The committee likes the idea of a working family initiative but members voiced concern about using WAA funds for the project. Ms. Rowin explained the Annie E. Casey Foundation approached the Department after the establishment of the advisory panel with interest in funding certain projects to research the result. This project would be a pilot program to measure the impact of training and education on job advancement.

At the moment some of the advisory panel suggestions are on hold due to budgetary concerns. The budget office estimates the state is \$300 million to \$1.3 billion short; from the *Wheeler Report* it looks like it's closer to the higher number.

Issue/Discussion: Caseload Increases Project and Extension Data, Nancy Buckwalter, DWS/BPS, Paul Saeman, DWS/BWI

The Secretary's Office commissioned a group to study the increase in caseload and what's influencing the increase. Mr. Krivsky, Ms. Bermingham and Roger Williams from OIC are local agency representatives on this group. Ms. Buckwalter added the Department has a large amount of information and now needs to analyze the information for trends. The group decided to look at 10 areas around the state and more finite areas in Milwaukee. Around the state the fluctuations vary greatly, with a 50% caseload decrease in LaCrosse, a 25% increase in Marathon and an 89% increase in Outagamie. The group will look at many factors including:

- W-2 Payment or Non-payment Cases
- Childcare Cases
- FSET Cases
- High school diplomas
- Disabilities in the household
- W-2 Sanctions
- Small Agency Supplement
- Contract dollars
- Comprehensive economic look at UI claims, New Hires, Job Losses
- Number of entered employments
- Average wage rate

The group decided to produce a plan by the end of November. The plan will include an action plan, i.e., actions to take if the caseload continues to rise. The committee members question the types of action the DWD is considering taking if the caseload continues to increase. The Department is considering a wide range of options including:

- Addressing the allocation amount to the number in the current caseload
- Moving administrative costs to benefits
- Establishing a contingency fund
- Approaching the legislature

One member suggested looking at the increase in the CMC caseload and policies around this population and reiterating the work first philosophy. Others stated the economic downturn has influenced their area and jobs are not available. Ms. Rowin plans to commission a study on the CMC caseload to see the reason for the increase in certain areas.

Members suggested the Department look at additional variables in the study. The ideas consist of:

- Looking at participants' characteristics such as barriers
- Recruiting regional staff to interview local agency heads to get a local perspective
- Hosting a meeting of local personnel to determine how to address impact of higher caseloads on staff

Ms. Buckwalter responded the Department is using the information currently available and CARES does not drill down to specifics. The Department is including demographics such as age, growth in placements and education levels.

Mr. Saeman provided a user-friendly summary report on both the 24- and 60-month extension cases. The research and statistics area originally created the report for Rachael Biittner in the communications office. Members remarked that the information is helpful and requested that both the 24-month and 60-month information mirror each other. Mr. Saeman stated that his staff is creating a data base to capture participants that hit the 21st month so future information will include the number that hit 24 months, the number of individuals who requested an extension and the number that were granted an extension.

NEXT MEETING DATE: December 21, 2001
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
201 East Washington Ave.
GEF 1, Room 203D
Madison, WI